

## Leadership Research

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The field of leadership research is by no means a new field. Many years have been dedicated to various forms of leadership research. However, new topics constantly arise and even though not all such topics are related, they can be linked to each other in order to move forward various subfields in leadership research. Gurkan's (2011), Dimdin's (2010) and Kelly's (2011) works may seem unrelated through a naked eye. However, they can all be used in relation to educational research on the topic of increasing test scores in public schools through a strong language arts program. It is the aim of this paper to shed light on similarities and differences between the three articles mentioned above and to link them to research on standardized score improvement.

Murat Gurkan (2011) conducted a study focusing on the views of administrators and teachers on participation in decision making at school. Gurkan (2011) claimed that previously done studies on this subject determined that teachers are key stake holders in schools and thus should be a part of the decision making process. Gurkan (2011) determined the purpose of his study to be identifying the views of teachers and administrators "regarding their participation to the decisions take at the meetings held at schools and the problems based on these views while developing suggestions for solutions" (Gurkan, 2011).

The descriptive survey method was used to conduct the study. The population of Gurkan's (2011) study consisted of "all primary and middle schools in the boundaries of city of Ankara and the teachers and administrators working at these schools" (Gurkan, 2011). The survey was sent to 625 personnel in 14 schools. The total of returned surveys was 388. The survey was used to gather information. It consisted of 20 questions, two of which were not used for assessment. The other 18 looked to assess the views of teachers and administrators on participation in decision making process of schools.

The findings showed that 40.8% of teachers and administrators believed that the agenda for schools meetings was determined solely by the principal. Only 28.4 % of teachers and administrators believed that there is a shared decision-making culture at the schools. The study allowed the researcher to conclude that the teachers and administrators are not supported in the school systems. School principals determine meeting agendas regularly. Decision making as a result of meetings is only done by the principals. Teachers are open to attending meetings. However, they do not view themselves as key stake holders in decision making. Expert opinion is usually not requested at the school level. Therefore, the results show that much needs to be achieved in order to involve teachers and principals in the decision making process. Gurkan (2011) does not state implications of his study on future research at all.

Gurkan's (2011) work demonstrates the discrepancy between the general view of where the power should lay and where it actually is in the school system. This work shows that although the truth about teachers being key stake holders in schools seems obvious, it is very far from reality and teachers are often not seen as important stake holders at all in the school system. Dimdin's (2010) work is very different from Gurkan's (2011) in that it focuses on self-reported leadership in the military and is completely different from the school system. However, this work is similar to the previously described work because it shows the importance of being a key stake holder and the views of such people on themselves and their surroundings.

Dimdin's (2010) work *The Relationship between Self-Reported Transformational Leadership and Social Identification in the Military* makes the hypothesis that "higher ranking military personnel will demonstrate higher self-reported transformational leadership behavior than lower-ranking military personnel (Dimdin, 2010). Dimdins' (2010) also makes the hypothesis that a positive correlation exists between "the military personnel's self-

reported transformational leadership behavior and their identification with a military unit” (Dimdins, 2010).

The study was done in a military conflict area. The sample of the study consisted of 203 soldiers from International Security Assistance Force operation area in Afghanistan in 2008. The participants were to describe their rank as one of the following: “officers, non-commissioned officers and privates” (Dimdins, 2010). The break down was the following: 91 officers, 89 non-commissioned officers, and 23 privates. One hundred and three soldiers had previous military combat experience. Out of the studied population, 190 soldiers were male and 13 female. Multifactor leadership questionnaire was used as a measure of transformational leadership. This questionnaire consisted of 45 items focusing on transformational leadership behaviors. The permission of the region commander in Latvia was obtained in order to conduct this study.

It was hypothesized that high ranking officers would self-report more transformational leadership behaviors than lower ranking soldiers. This was confirmed to be true. The self-reported leadership behavior was measured in the field setting which could be different when measured in various settings. The results showed that “the notion that the differences of transformational leadership among different levels of hierarchy are not essential in the military” (Dimdins, 2010). This was true in some specific cases that cannot be generalized to the military as a whole. This study shows that it is very important to study leadership behavior in the military setting. Such studies are crucial to better understand the function of leadership theories in the military setting.

Similarly to Dimdin’s (2010) work, Kelly (2011) focuses on social ranks and their effects in the workforce. These works are very similar in that they compare societal impact as well as

role impact on performance. However, they are different in that both focus on very different career fields of the studied subjects.

Kelly (2011) focuses on social rank styles in her work, *Leaders' and Followers' Social Rank Styles Interact to Predict Group Performance*. Kelly's (2011) work placed four individuals who do not know each other into groups to work on articles in the style of a newsletter together. One of the individuals was given the role of a leader while others were assigned to be followers. The participants were told they would receive group and individual rewards in order to simulate modern work force. The researcher believed that the followers' social rank styles would either hinder or enhance group performance.

The sample size was 45 groups of four "female undergraduate students from a university in an urban center in Canada" (Kelly, 2011). The researcher believed that having a single sex sample would allow the researcher to isolate rank related interactions much better and would eliminate the influence of gender on the study through group dynamics.

The results showed that "in small groups who were working together in the short term and where rewards were promised for individual and team performance, the mean social rank style of followers moderated the impact of leader social rank styles on group performance" (Kelly, 2011). Just as hypothesized, leader and follower social rank styles interacted to predict performance. The limitations of this study were sex, age range, and ethnicity of the participants. The value of this study is in showing how integrating evolutionary personality psychology with leadership and followership can affect group dynamics.

All three studies described above shed light on performance and the role of stakeholders in the field of leadership. A possible research topic that could emerge from these works is measuring success of a program focused on language arts being placed into the public schools as

an additional class or an afterschool program. The goal of this program would be to show that mathematics and science test scores can significantly increase through the use of teams and transformational leadership in language arts curriculum. The hypothesis would be that when students have better comprehension of any text they are presented and can analyze it, these students will have increase standardized test scores in any subject. Therefore, current focus on mathematics and science with neglect for language arts programs would be deemed ineffective if this study is successful and would open further research on team work/collaboration, and transformational leadership being used in order to increase test scores across the states.

## References

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